

REMARKS**STATUS OF THE CLAIMS**

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-9, 19-27, 37, 41, 43 and 45 have been amended. Claims 10-18, 28-36 and 46-54 have been withdrawn. Claims 1-9, 19-27 and 37-45 are pending and under consideration.

The information processing method "executed by an intermediary computer that can communicate with a first computer and a second computer" in claim 1 is supported by page 2, lines 11-25 of the specification. The claim limitation "encrypting at least said second data" in claim 1 is supported by page 14, line 31 – page 15, line 5 of the specification. Claims 7, 19, 25, 37 and 43 are amended in accordance with the amendments in claim 1.

The claim limitation "wherein said third digital signature is sent to said second computer in said sending" in claim 5 is supported by page 22, lines 10-14 of the specification.

Other amendments just modify linguistic expression in accordance with the amended claim limitations. Therefore, no new matter is presented.

Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112

In the office action at page 2, numbered item 5, claims 3, 21 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 because it is unclear "why a digital signature for an item must be sent if the item itself is not sent". However, as disclosed in page 21, lines 14-20 of the specification, the format reverse-conversion program itself may have been originally stored in the intermediary computer, and sent to the first computer before receiving said digital signature. In this case, the intermediary computer does not have to receive the format reverse-conversion program from the first computer. Thus, as described in page 25, lines 22-23 of the specification, there may be a case that the format reverse-conversion program may not be sent from the first computer to the intermediary computer, and the claims are not unclear.

Claims 5, 23 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 because it is unclear what entity receives the request and why the receiving step is necessary. However, in the amended claim 1 on which claim 5 is dependent, it is clear that the request from the first computer is received by the intermediary computer. Moreover, as disclosed in page 16, lines 13-19 of the specification, there may be a case that it is better to obtain the conclusive evidence from the company A for

the format reverse-conversion program, too. Moreover, it is clear in the amended claims that the third digital signature for at least said format reverse-conversion program is received from the first computer. Therefore, these claims are not unclear.

Claims 6, 24 and 42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 because it is unclear if there is a second digital signature involved. However, since the second digital signature is generated in the intermediary computer as disclosed in claim 2 for example, it is clear for the person skilled in the art that the second signature is not received from the first computer. Therefore, these claims are not unclear.

Claims 9, 27 and 45 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 because it is unclear whether the "second signature" refers to the "said second digital signature". In the amended claims, the term "second signature" has been replaced with the term "second digital signature". Therefore, these claims are not unclear.

Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 because it is unclear which claim this claim is dependent on. In the amended claims, it is clear that this claim is dependent on claim 21.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 7-9, 19, 20, 25-27, 37, 38 and 43-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Namba et al. (U.S. PATENT No. 5,966,448. hereinafter "Namba") in view of Micali (U.S. PATENT No. 5,553,145).

The rejections of these claims are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

In the amended claim, the information processing method comprises, in addition to performing format conversion, encrypting at least the second data, which has been generated in the performing format conversion.

On the other hand, in the office action at page 4, numbered item 7, the examiner states that Namba discloses performing format conversion. In the cited portion, Col. 12, lines 10-45, Namba discloses the "cipher conversion processing", in which the received file A1 is decrypted with the key KAA1 and re-encrypted with KAB1 to generate the file B1. However, Namba never discloses or suggests further encrypting the file B1, which has been generated in the cipher conversion processing.

Moreover, although Micali suggests encrypting data, Micali never discloses or suggests "performing format conversion" in addition to encrypting the data. Therefore, Namba and Micali,

taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest “performing format conversion” and “encrypting the second data” generated in the performing format conversion.

The examiner acknowledges that Namba does not teach sending “a format reverse-conversion program” as recited in claim 1, and asserts that Micali teaches.

It is clear that the term “program” in this claim means “a sequence of coded instructions that can be inserted into a mechanism”, as disclosed in Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (<http://www.m-w.com/dictionary>).

On the other hand, Micali just discloses sending only the key $E_B(m)$ in Col. 12, lines 25-30. It is clear that the term “key” in Micali means “a value which must be fed into the algorithm used to decode an encrypted message in order to reproduce the original plain text”, as disclosed in Computer Dictionary Online (<http://www.computer-dictionary-online.org>), and does not include any coded instruction “that can be inserted into a mechanism”. Thus, Micali does not disclose or suggest sending “a format reverse-conversion program” as disclosed in this claim.

Moreover, as mentioned above, Micali does not disclose or suggest performing format conversion. Therefore, Namba and Micali, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest sending a “format reverse-conversion program”.

Similarly, other independent claims 19 and 37 recite the aforementioned claim limitations as recited in claim 1.

Dependent claims 2, 20 and 38 patentably distinguish of their own or are at least patentably distinguishing due to their dependence from the independent claim.

The examiner asserts that Namba discloses sending “identification information for identifying a format reverse-conversion program” as recited in claim 7. Namba discloses sending “the server identifier of the cryptographic protocol conversion server” in Col. 13, lines 15-55.

However, “the server identifier” in Namba just determines which decryption key must be utilized in the reception terminal. Namba never discloses or suggests that “the server identifier” identifies “a format reverse-conversion program”.

Furthermore, as mentioned in claim 1, Micali never discloses or suggests a “format reverse-conversion program”. Thus, Namba and Micali, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest sending “identification information for identifying a format reverse-conversion program”.

Similarly, other independent claims 25 and 43 recite the aforementioned claim limitations as recited in claim 7.

Dependent claims 8, 9, 26, 27, 44 and 45 patentably distinguish of their own or are at least patentably distinguishing due to their dependence from the independent claim.

Claims 3-6, 21-24 and 39-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Namba in view of Micali and further in view of Menezes' Handbook of Applied Cryptography (1997) (Hereinafter Menezes).

The rejections of these claims are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Menezes never discloses or suggests a "format reverse-conversion program", as recited in claim 1, on which claims 3-6 are dependent. Thus, Namba, Micali, and Menezes, taken alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest digital signature "for at least said format reverse-conversion program".

Similarly, other claims 21-24 and 39-42 recite the aforementioned claim limitations as recited in claim 3-6.

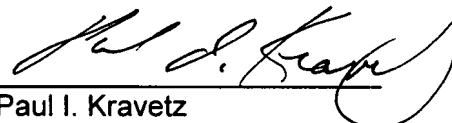
For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

If any further fees are required in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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